

# PRESS RELEASE

## Congressman John Conyers, Jr.

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### CONYERS, AND OTHER HOUSE JUDICIARY DEMOCRATS ASK BLACKWELL TO EXPLAIN ALLEGED OHIO ELECTION IRREGULARITIES

In response to information obtained as part of the House Judiciary Committee Democratic staff's ongoing investigation of election irregularities in the 2004 election, Congressman John Conyers, Jr., Ranking Member of the House Judiciary Committee, along with Representatives Jerrold Nadler, Melvin Watt, Sheila Jackson Lee, Maxine Waters, William Delahunt, Robert Wexler, Tammy Baldwin, Anthony Weiner and Linda Sanchez, wrote to Ohio Secretary of State Ken Blackwell requesting that he respond to reports of election irregularities in the state of Ohio.

The Members wrote to Blackwell:

“Collectively, we are concerned that these complaints constitute a troubled portrait of a one-two punch that may well have altered and suppressed votes, particularly minority and Democratic votes. First, it appears there were substantial irregularities in vote tallies. It is unclear whether these apparent errors were the result of machine malfunctions or fraud.

Second, it appears that a series of actions of government and non-government officials may have worked to frustrate minority voters. Consistent and widespread reports indicate a lack of voting machines in urban, minority and Democratic areas, and a surplus of such machines in Republican, white and rural areas. As a result, minority voters were discouraged from voting by lines that were in excess of eight hours long. Many of these voters were also apparently victims of a campaign of deception, where flyers and calls would direct them to the wrong polling place. Once at that polling place, after waiting for hours in line, many of these voters were provided provisional ballots after learning they were at the wrong location. These ballots were not counted in many jurisdictions because of a directive issued by some election officials, such as yourself.

We're sure you agree with us that regardless of the outcome of the election, it is imperative that we examine any and all factors that may have led to voting irregularities and any failure of votes to be properly counted.”

Among other questions, the Members asked Blackwell to respond to the following:

- Why did Warren County officials exclude members of the press from observing vote counting on election night, claiming an FBI agent had warned of a terrorist threat that was a “10” on a scale of one to ten, but the FBI has no knowledge of such a warning?
- Why did precincts in Perry County apparently record more votes than voters?
- Why did Butler County and a number of other counties record more votes for an underfunded Democratic candidate for State Supreme Court than were recorded for the Democratic Presidential candidate?
- Why did historically Democratic precincts in Cleveland record up to twenty-two times more votes for the Constitution Party Presidential candidate than all third-party candidates combined received in the 2000 election?
- Why did voters in Mahong County report that when they attempted to record a vote for John Kerry their vote was displayed as being cast for George W. Bush?
- Why did there appear to be a shortage of voting machines in traditionally Democratic precincts on election day, causing up to ten hour delays for voters, while there was an apparent surplus of voting machines in traditionally Republican precincts?